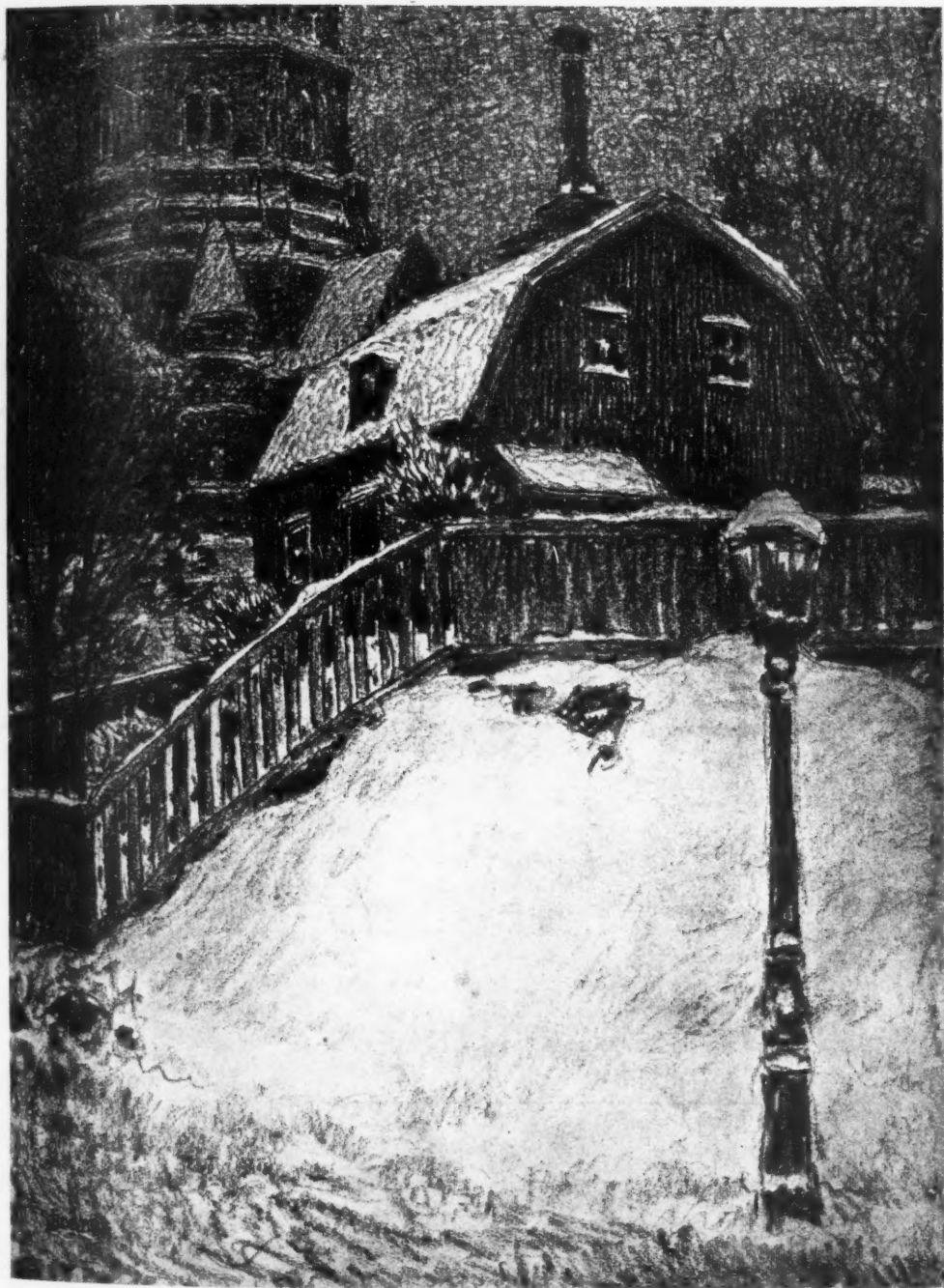


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YULE NUMBER

"My own life is the most wonderful Fairy Tale of all"

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

By HIMSELF

This is the story of the shoe-maker's son of Odense who became the companion of kings and the most beloved of writers. Like all his other fairy tales, Hans Christian's autobiography is touched with romantic fancy and tuned to the ears of children. Who can resist the temptation to be an eavesdropper when Andersen tells a story, especially if it be the fairy tale of his Life!

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Since 1840, Peter Andreas Munch's handbook of *Norse Mythology* has been a standard work in Norway. Later scholarship has modified but has not replaced it, and to-day Munch's book still retains popular and scholarly prestige. It is a tribute to the enduring quality of Munch's work that the great authority of our day, Professor Magnus Olsen, chose to bring up to date the older historian's text rather than attempt a new study of the Norse "Age of Fable." The result is this

volume, *Norse Mythology: Legends of Gods and Heroes*, translated by Dr. S. B. Hustvedt, which the American publishers offer as the authoritative guide to the world of Northern myth and legend. It is intended to serve alike the student of Old Norse literature, the reader of other literatures in which the ancient themes occur, and especially the general reader who has searched often and in vain for one handy volume to tell him of the old Norse gods and their affairs. Price, \$2.50



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Merry Christmas!

Why not vary the traditional greeting and wish you all a Leisurely Christmas? For how can one be merry without leisure?

The old-fashioned Christmas of the North took time, for all the activities of the year swung upon it as on a pivot, but it was worth all the effort it required. Not many decades ago one could still find among Scandinavian Americans paler reflections of the picturesque Christmas customs of the old country. They were a part of the submerged strata that rose into the light of day only once a year.

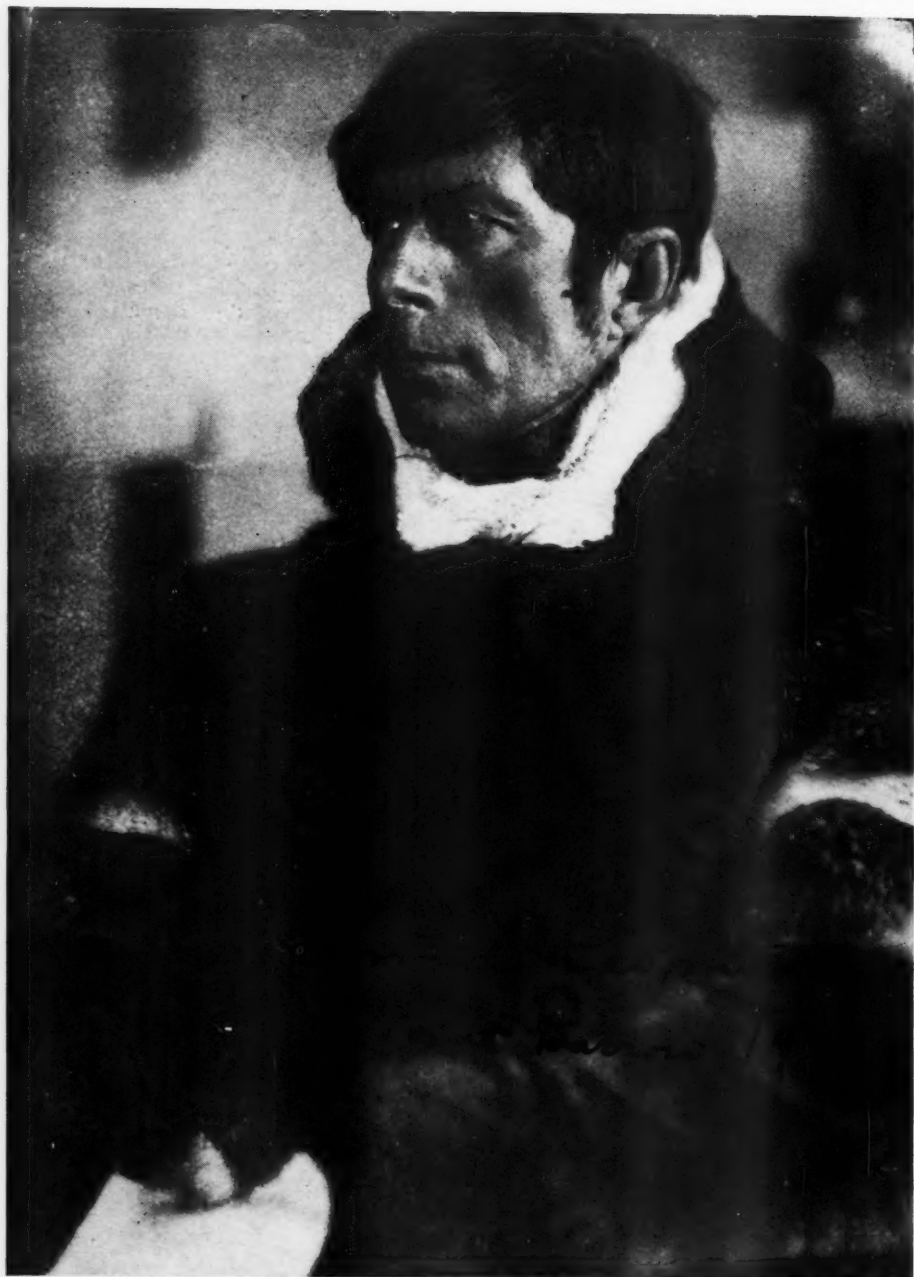
We bring to mind a certain small town in the great corn belt. A college town, which shall be nameless. Those who know it, know it. There Christmas meant something. First came the long preparations, the baking and cooking, the cleaning and furbishing, the donning of new clothes, the making ready of mind and body for the greatest festival of the year. On Christmas Eve there was the solemn ushering in of the holy season by the ringing of church bells, followed by the supper where the Christ-

mas food was tasted for the first time. There were always certain traditional kinds of food, which were never made at any other time.

Christmas matins were not so picturesque as the torch-lit ride to the tune of sleigh-bells, but one could get quite a thrill even out of walking to early morning service under the stars. Then was heard for the first time the Christmas greeting which was to be the regular form of salutation until Twelfthnight—and some old-fashioned people used it till Hilarymas.

The first twenty-four hours of the Christmas season were sacred to the family, but on "Second Day Christmas" all homes were opened. It would be difficult to say just how deep traditional roots had the games and the feasting of the two merry weeks that followed. Of conscious revival there was little except an occasional Yule buck, but there was the old-fashioned spirit of kindness and hospitality. And there was leisure to savor Christmas, to hold it on one's tongue and taste that it was sweet.

Friends of the REVIEW, old and new, we wish you all a leisurely Christmas!



KNUD RASMUSSEN

KNUD RASMUSSEN combines the qualities of the poet, the scholar, and the adventurous explorer. Born and brought up in Greenland, he speaks the Eskimo language perfectly, while Denmark gave him his scholarly training. His numerous exploring trips have concerned themselves mainly with the Eskimo people, their language, poetry, folk-lore, music, and religious cult. His last trip, the Fifth Thule Expedition, was undertaken in order to trace the connection between the American Eskimos and those of Greenland. In this he was remarkably

successful, bringing to light many new facts regarding the people and their migrations. The early part of the expedition was described by one of the members, Kaj Birket-Smith, in the REVIEW a little over a year ago. The

latter part of the trip Knud Rasmussen took alone with two Eskimo companions and a single dog team. He skirted the coast of North America from Hudson Bay to Behring Strait, crossed over to the Asiatic side, and visited the Siberian Eskimos—the longest sledge trip ever made. Dr. Rasmussen is now in New York preparing the English edition of his last book for publication here. He was a guest of honor at the October meeting of the Foundation's New York Chapter and spoke on "The Philosophy of the Eskimos."

ALEXANDER BUGGE is a world authority on the viking period, his best known popular book being a two-volume work entitled *Vikingerne*. Professor Bugge's

special field, in which he has rendered important contributions, is the interplay of Norse and Celtic culture in the Middle Ages.

LOUISE HAGBERG holds a position in the Northern Museum at Stockholm, where old Christmas customs have been preserved and copied. The illustrations for her article are in part loaned by the Museum, in part taken from Nils Keyland's book, *Julbröd, Julbocker og Stafanssång*, published by the Museum.



ONE OF THE SLEDGES OF THE FIFTH THULE EXPEDITION LOADED WITH ETHNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL INCLUDING A KAYAK

FERDINAND BOBERG has in his drawings undertaken a task which by its magnitude reminds us that he is also the architect of cathedrals and world expositions. He has made hundreds of drawings, preserving a record of the old

Sweden that passes. Some of these were printed in the REVIEW last year, and a large collection were exhibited in the Brooklyn Museum. The six reproduced today were chosen for their charming old world atmosphere bringing back thoughts of Christmas and winter holidays of long ago.

JOHAN FALKBERGET in his story today uses the same picturesque background of the cosmopolitan old mining town which he described in his article in the REVIEW on "Röros, the Copper Town of Norway." The idealism which underlies the harsh, crude life he depicts is characteristic, especially of this author's later works.

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An Arctic Christmas

By KNUD RASMUSSEN

AN OLD, blind Eskimo woman fought her way across the ice against a driving storm. In one hand she held a staff on which she leaned heavily; with the other she held by line a lean dog which, with its nose deep down in some half-hidden sledge tracks, was trying to lead her on to some distant place where they might find people. Woman and dog seemed equally exhausted. When the icy waves of drifting snow rolled over them they were obliged to stop and gasp for breath. For a moment they stood swaying in the wind, gathering strength to continue their journey. Although from time to time the uneven footing caused the old woman to totter and fall, each time she struggled desperately to her feet and again took up her unequal battle against the storm, which had no pity for her white hairs and her sightless eyes.

Her name was Kusek, "the Waterdrop," and in spite of her advanced age she was brave and possessed of great endurance. She belonged to a tribe from Victoria Land which during the Summer and Fall had hunted reindeer on the uplands between Stapylton Bay and Great Bear Lake, where game is plentiful. The hunting had been good, but a heavy snowfall at the beginning of winter had driven them down to the sea ice before the sealing season was on. As only a small part of the dried meat could be freighted through the heavy going, they had been obliged to cache most of it far inland and had reached the coast with their provisions completely exhausted.

It was well on into December, a time which the Eskimos call "the middle of the dark" or "the hard month," when every living thing must put up its hardest fight for life and food. It was as if all game had sunk into the ground; one might go days without seeing a single fresh track. The wild reindeer had withdrawn themselves to

the shelter of the forests, while hare and ptarmigan had found cover in the thick brush of the inland where the wandering Eskimo hunters never come. At this time the cold is so severe that one ventures out only in the very warmest of clothing, and the wind, which cuts the face and body like knives, seems never to rest during this dreadful month when man and beast alike must suffer.

It was a desperate situation that confronted the Waterdrop's tribe

when they reached the sea ice at a place where huge ice packs barred the seals out. The only safety for the tribe lay in a swift flight to the region between Victoria Land and Bernard Harbor, where the hunting is always good. The journey could be made in a week, but they must hurry, while they still had sufficient strength.

The Waterdrop was the oldest woman of the tribe; she had seen two generations come into the world and grow up to manhood and womanhood. For seventy years her life had been a series of migrations from one hunting ground to another. It had been a life of arduous toil, but she had met it with a smile and a song. Life itself was beautiful, and it was all she had asked.

She existed only to be useful, and



KUSEK—"THE WATERDROP"

it never occurred to her to make any demands for herself. Only in the later years, after she had become blind, had her grandchildren, out of consideration for her helplessness, given her an uncomfortable seat on the top of the heavily laden sledge when they shifted to a new hunting ground. But this time, when starvation lay in wait for them and death threatened from every snowdrift, they had left her behind. For it was the custom of the tribe that those who were old and useless must give way for the young who were to carry the tribe on, and those who were no longer able to take care of themselves must die.

The Waterdrop felt no trace of bitterness at being left to her fate; on the contrary, she was grateful that they had given her one last chance in leaving her a dog. To be sure, she had no provisions, but a dog and an old woman would need very little, if they only could fight

off the cold without becoming too greatly exhausted. Two alternatives now faced Waterdrop. One was to remain in the snow hut and freeze to death; the other was to make an attempt to reach her people. Not being one of those who give up without a struggle, she decided, with the aid of her dog, to make a last fight for life. Could she but travel as far in a day as the others had done, she could find shelter each night in the snow hut abandoned by the tribe. For two days in succession she had succeeded in doing this, and had it not been for this snow-storm she might have kept it up for a day or two longer. But now it was hopeless. Her rapidly failing strength made it impossible for her to make headway against the raging blast. At each misstep the wind threw her to the ground, and each time it was more difficult to rise. At last she decided to seek a place to die. At such a time one's demands upon Fate become modest indeed, and so the old woman was glad when the dog led her to the lee of a snowdrift that had formed by a breathing hole in the ice. Here she sank down with a smile at the thought of being able to die in a sheltered place. No longer did she feel cold or hunger. A sense of well-being came over her, and she closed her eyes to dream of the days when life was all joy and feasting. She was an old and hardy nomad, and she was prepared to meet death with a calm and tranquil spirit.

*

Sam Johnson was a big, husky fur hunter who had come to the Arctic coast after an unsuccessful attempt at gold mining in the country about Dawson. Crossing the Yukon he had come in the company of some Indians to Fort MacPherson, and thence to the Mackenzie Delta. Of his past, nothing was known. The few people who occasionally passed the night at his place asked no questions, but were content to enjoy his generous hospitality.

We came to his camp at dusk of a winter afternoon after a long and arduous journey. It was a wildly beautiful region with fantastically formed mountains breasting the winter storms and covered with snow all the way up their steep slopes. We had for many days traveled over endless lowlands with nothing to break the monotony of the view, and we were sitting on our sledges admiring the bold lines of the landscape, when we caught sight of a tiny light that seemed to flicker as though beckoning to us. The cold wind, blowing in our faces with light flurries of snow, speeded up our dogs, and it was not long before, at the mouth of a river, we came upon a lone form standing before a heap of snow at the top of a bluff.

There is nothing like solitude to sharpen the senses; one learns to listen, and the ear detects the slightest sound in the great silence. Thus it was that this man, who had had no inkling of our coming, already stood prepared to welcome us. It was long since he had talked with any living creatures except his dogs, and he came to meet



SAGDLUAK, AN OLD-TIMER FROM THE HEADWATERS OF THE COLVILLE RIVER IN ALASKA, HAS BECOME WEALTHY TRADING FURS TO THE WHITE MAN. HIS HOUSE IS FURNISHED WITH THE GIMCRACKS OF WHITE CIVILIZATION

us with a curious taciturn heartiness which boded well for the hospitality that awaited us. Quickly our dogs were tied and fed and our sledge-load disposed in a secure place, and when this was done our host invited us to make his humble dwelling our own. And it was, in truth, an humble dwelling. Through a long snow passage, so narrow that we had to remove our furs in order to squeeze through, we crawled into a little room, perhaps three meters square, with a low ceiling and sloping walls. To our astonishment we found that it was not, as we supposed, built of wood, but a simple canvas tent built over with snow. Here this man lived in the midst of snow storms in a temperature that was more often than not under 40 deg. C. But driftwood is so plentiful along the coast that there was always fuel for his little stove, and this, with the ex-

ception of a petroleum lamp, was the only luxury the house could boast. There was no table, nor were there any chairs. Along one wall was a narrow couch covered with fur robes and a reindeer sleeping bag. We were at once served with scalding tea and flapjacks, and as nothing can be more stimulating when one comes in from the cold, our tongues were soon loosened. No one thought of sleep for the time being, for several large, fat salmon had been brought in to be thawed out, and a delicate hindquarter of reindeer was already roasting over the fire. Our solicitous host treated us like a lot of lost children who needed his care, and it was not until his hospitable activities had slowed down a bit that I was able to convey to him the greeting which would make a fitting conclusion for the story I had heard a few weeks earlier from the Eskimos at Union and Dolphin Strait. Wishing to take Johnson by surprise, I said, without the slightest introduction: "Johnson, I have just come from your old friend, The Waterdrop."

He started as he heard the name. Then, realizing that I knew so much that evasion would be useless, he sat down beside me and began his story, his weatherbeaten cheeks reddening slightly with embar-

rassment while he talked:

"It happened, you know, on Christmas Eve, and on that Christmas Eve which I had decided to skip."

Then, interrupting himself, he added: "But what would the Eskimos know about that? They know nothing about Christmas, and I couldn't explain it to them."

Johnson's story, a veritable ray of Arctic sunshine, was doubly impressive to his hearers, coming as it did from this rough giant, clad in worn and shaggy furs. Even his harsh voice took on a mellower sound at the thought of the poor, helpless creature who had made that Christmas Eve the most memorable one in his life.

"Yes," he began, "I had intended to skip Christmas altogether, and for that reason I had planned an unusually long and difficult trip to begin the very day before Christmas. You, who have traveled much, will understand. You see, I had, from force of habit, laid aside choice meat and extra tobacco and coffee for the Holidays, but as the time drew near my thoughts grew heavier and heavier. I suppose I am no worse than many another prospector who has run away from home; but a hermit's Christmas is apt to be a time of making an accounting of his past life, and that is not easy. Memories come up of deeds one might wish to have left undone. Homesickness, unknown at other times, then makes itself felt. Dreams of childhood visit one and a man wishes that just for this one day he might be among human beings once more.

"I could not bear to be inactive, and although it was blowing up for a snow-storm from the northwest, I got my dogs together and set out for my outcamp fifty miles south of my tent here. I had not traveled far before my dogs began to sniff the air. I had traps out, and I was already anticipating my catch when I caught sight of a white fox which seemed to have scent of something unusual far out on the ice. Suddenly it found the direction, and as it raised its tail like a banner and raced over the snow, my dogs saw it and set out



TWO WOMEN FROM THE BARREN GROUNDS, WEST OF HUDSON BAY, FAR FROM ALL TRADING-POSTS. MANY OF THESE WOMEN HAVE NEVER SEEN A WHITE MAN



WE MEET A TRAPPER ALONG THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE. WHITE TRAPPERS ARE SCATTERED ALL ALONG THE ARCTIC COAST, OFTEN LIVING ALONE FOR MONTHS HUNDREDS OF MILES FROM OTHER HUMAN BEINGS

in pursuit at a wild pace.

"'Bear,' thought I and got my gun ready, for when the fox is hungry he often follows the bear to feast off his leavings. With a bear hunt in prospect perhaps I might have a merry Christmas Eve after all.

"I rode a long time without anything happening, and the storm was growing worse and worse. I had little by

little gotten far out of my route as the dogs steadily followed the fresh fox tracks, and I was just about to swing off on my proper course when the fox again showed himself, so close by that his eyes looked directly into mine. In an instant he was gone, but the dogs were after him, and from now on the chase was a wild one.

"Then, a short distance ahead, I caught sight of something dark that could not be a bear. 'A wolverine,' I thought, 'but why so tame?' As we came nearer I saw that it was a lean, shaggy Eskimo dog that the fox had led us to.

"A dog? But what was it doing here so far out on the ice? I had jumped from the sledge to prevent my own dogs from attacking this poor starving cur, when, to my astonishment, a snowdrift just beside me began to open up. I heard a sharp cry, and up from the snow, shivering with cold but alive and smiling, rose an old, blind Eskimo woman. She was so far gone that she could not speak, but when she quickly understood that I was not of her race, she began to gesticulate vehemently, pointing over the ice toward Stapylton Bay. How she had come here I did not understand. But there was no time for explanations if she was not to die on my hands. In a jiffy I had her bundled up in my robes and we were off as fast as my team could travel, toward my tent from which I had fled a few hours earlier. Behind us followed the old woman's dog at a brisk trot and with his tail held proudly aloft. It was as if he understood that he had fulfilled his mission by leading the blind woman to a place frequented by human beings.

"The rest is soon told, for the little old woman and I could not carry on much of any conversation. She was given the place of honor on my couch, and even her dog was allowed to come in by the fire, a privilege that my own dogs have never had. And so we celebrated Christmas Eve. All my treasured delicacies were brought

forth, and I was so fully occupied in looking after my strange guest that night came on before I knew it. I brought out candles and set them wherever I could find place for them, illuminating my home in honor of the day. Curiously enough, I felt in better humor than I had in years. I had saved a human life, and in return it had been brought home to me that Christmas is Christmas only when one has an opportunity to be something for others.

"As soon as the old woman had fully regained her strength I took her in the direction she had pointed out to me the first time we met. It was not difficult to follow the sledge tracks, and after a few days we reached her people, who were then in the midst of seal hunting. Great was their astonishment at our arrival, for they had no idea that there was a white man living near the place where they had gone down to the sea ice, and they had supposed that the old woman was frozen to death long ago.

"And that is the end of my Christmas Eve adventure."

*

Meat and salmon were set before us, and we helped ourselves with the greediness that comes of a long day's journey.



THE WHITE FOX IN HIS WINTER COAT

With the coffee, pipes were brought out, and soon, enveloped in clouds of smoke, we gave ourselves up to that unexplainable well-being which only a good host knows how to create. And I thought of Sam Johnson, who from fear of becoming the prey of old memories had decided to skip Christmas alto-

gether, and who had ended by celebrating it together with a dog and an old heathen woman who, deserted by her tribe, had spent her first Christmas Eve at the threshold of death.

It was late when we crawled into our sleeping bags, and long after the lights were out and conversation had ceased I could still hear that steady, quiet voice speaking those words, so self-evident and yet so true:

"Christmas is Christmas only when one can be something for others."



BERGEN
From an Old Print

An Empire of the Sea

A Fourteenth Century Journey through the Realm of Norway

By ALEXANDER BUGGE

LET us suppose that we live a little more than six hundred years ago. We are "in our most vigorous years and have a desire to travel abroad"—in the words of a Norwegian book from the middle of the thirteenth century, the so-called *King's Mirror* or *Speculum Regale*. The Norwegians, you know, have always been a seafaring people, and in the Middle Ages it was a part of the education of young men in the best families to go abroad on merchant ships in order to visit foreign countries. We find room for ourselves and for our supply of Norwegian wares—stock-fish, furs, living falcons, etc.—in a ship owned by a merchant of Bergen; and from this port we sail to England, where we land outside of Lynn in Norfolk.

From King's Lynn to Old Chester

Lynn, as you know, is now called King's Lynn, but in the Middle Ages it was called Bishop's Lynn. The borough, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, belongs to the Bishop of Norwich, whose bailiffs collect the customs and register the names of foreign ships and of the merchants on board them. This duly done, we are allowed

to go on shore. We have an introduction to one of the first merchants of the town. His name is Peter de Thornden. He is a wealthy man and well known. A few years later he is elected a member of Parliament. He receives us very kindly and greets us in Norwegian, of which language he has a smattering, partly because he himself has many Norwegian connections, but chiefly because his grandfather emigrated from Trondhjem in Norway, whence he derives his name.*) We come across other Norwegians settled in Lynn, and in the Fleet a few more ships from Bergen besides our own lie anchored. There is also one owned by the Archbishop of Nidaros, which is the largest of them all, and is called *The Help of St. Olav*, after the holy Norwegian king and martyr before whose image we kneel in one of the churches. Old people, however, can tell us that twenty or thirty years ago there were many more Norwegian ships coming to Lynn than now; at present the greater part of the stock-fish trade from Bergen is directed to Boston in Lincolnshire, where the Germans, afterwards members of the celebrated Hanseatic League, have a factory.

Lynn is not a very interesting town. When we walk along the muddy banks of the river we sink into the clay to far up on our legs. A blind beggar led by his dog stirs the whole town. One of the chief amusements is when some poor sinner is put into the stocks. Otherwise there is nothing to do and nothing to look at except some passing juggler or bear-leader. One of the crew on our ship has brought with him a living bear cub which he sells to one of these strollers. We are all sorry to bid farewell to our young friend who so often has amused us on the long and tedious voyage. One day is like another, except once when we ride to Norwich in order to attend a law-suit between a Norwegian ship-owner and an English merchant from a neighboring town who refuses to pay for a cargo of timber. In Norwich we are fortunate enough to see His Grace, the Bishop, walking in full state to the cathedral.

We are happy when at last we have sold our stock of goods, most of them to the above mentioned Peter de Thornden, but the falcons to a nobleman who is fond of hunting. We have now some money of our own, and are able to leave Lynn and continue the journey. We should like to have visited London of whose wonders we have heard so much; but our time is limited, and, instead of sailing along the coast, we traverse the country in order to reach western England. The roads are not safe from outlaws and highwaymen. Not long since a noble lady, travelling with her servants along one of the principal highways, was stopped by robbers and stripped of all her gold and trinkets. One of her varlets was killed, but the murderers are still at large. Therefore we do not venture to travel alone, but wait

*) Trondhjem is in medieval English documents called Thorndene. The old Norwegian name is Nidaros.



RIVER AND WALLS FROM DEE BRIDGE IN OLD CHESTER

until we get company. We are a whole caravan when at last we leave Lynn carrying a passport from his worship, the Mayor, in which he recommends us to all the authorities on the way. Happily we meet with no ill fortune, but arrive safely in Lancashire.

We have an introduction to one of the leading Lancashire families whose members are hereditary "lawmen" and preside at the *Moot* or district court, which is still, as in Norway, called *Thing*. Henry Laghman—this is the name of the squire—tells us that in his grandfather's time the ground was still cultivated by thralls and freedmen called *leysings* (Old Norse *leysingjar*). We come across old people who speak a sort of Norse language, strangely deteriorated, of course, and mixed with English and Celtic words. At Loppergarth in Furness we are even shown a runic inscription on the church wall which says in the Norse language: "Gamal founded this church, Hubert the mason wrought the marks." We also see high crosses with carvings of Sigurd who killed the dragon Fafnir, and of Loki and the wolf Fenrir. We realize that it is not many centuries since men of Norwegian origin settled in these districts. Unfortunately we can not

tarry long, as we shall soon have to leave England. Manchester and Liverpool do not yet exist. There is no traffic on the Mersey. The principal town is Chester, and there we take passage on a ship. We sail down the Dee, and then turn to the northwest.

In the Isle of Man

In the afternoon we catch sight of a large island with beautiful bays and narrow glens where the vegetation is luxuriant as in a hot-house. It is the Isle of Man. We cast anchor by a tiny island near the western coast called Holm Peel. A few fishermen's huts are clustered at the foot of a strong castle surrounded by a wall, and inside the wall we see a round tower and a beautiful little church, the cathedral of the diocese of Sodor*) and Man. They are all built of red sandstone which glows with a warm and pleasing hue in the setting sun.

It is only thirty and odd years since the castle was the residence of the kings of Man and the Isles, but at present it is uninhabited. The ancient royal race, descended from Godred Crovan who conquered Man in the same year that William the Conqueror landed in England, is extinct. We are so fortunate, however, as to have an introduction to one of the magnates or "lawmen" of the Isle of Man, and we spend some days on his farm. He is a sturdy fellow, fair, blue-

*) Sodor or "Southern Isles," the Norwegian name for Hebrides.



THE CASTLE AT PEEL, THE ISLE OF MAN

eyed, and tall, one of the few Manxmen who still speak Norn*), and is proud of his Norwegian origin. He is fond of talking, and gives us a glimpse of Manx history for the past few centuries, beginning with the conqueror, Godred Crovan, who, when asked where he came from, pointed to the Milky Way. Man and the Isles, our host tells us, formed a dependency of Norway from the time of Magnus Bare-leg (about the year 1100). But the Norwegian kings lived far away, and the kings of the Isles were virtually their own masters. To Scotland it was a nuisance, which in time became insufferable, to have this long chain of islands right outside its front windows in the possession of a foreign power. When King Alexander became of age, he therefore revived the plan long cherished by his forebears of reuniting the Hebrides with the Scottish Crown. As King Haakon of Norway was not willing to give up the islands, Alexander attacked them, and Haakon in the year 1263 was compelled to make an expedition to western Scotland in order to defend his rights. He was fairly successful, and once more became lord of the Isles. But in the autumn the old king sailed to Orkney, where he spent the winter at Kirkwall, and there he fell ill and died. His son Magnus, in 1266, ceded Man and the Hebrides to the Crown of Scotland.

The King of Man and his magnates for a time acknowledged King Alexander as their liege lord; but some years later they rebelled, and in 1275 Alexander made an expedition to Man where he killed many of the inhabitants. Since that time the island has had peace, and it is now protected by the mighty arm of King Edward of England. We can still see how terribly it has suffered at the hands of the Scotchmen. The inhabitants of Norse origin are almost extinct, and in many places—especially in the fertile regions in the northern part of the island—their farms lie waste, and their houses are uninhabited. There are no clergymen to attend the churches, but in the churchyards we see crosses with runic inscriptions in the Norwegian tongue decorated with sculptures representing Sigurd who killed the dragon, or Odin and Thor.

On Midsummer Day we are taken by our host to witness a most impressive ceremony outside of Peel. It is a beautiful day. The air is filled with fragrance from the blossoming hedges of hawthorne and fuchsia. The roads are black with people who come from every part of the island and are all bound for a hill which is visible not far away. It is a barrow erected by the hand of man, the famous Tynewald Hill**) where the Assembly of the Isle of Man is still opened every year. The bishop of Sodor and Man having celebrated divine service in the adjoining St. John's Chapel, proceeds in state with the governor and the Manx magnates to Tynewald Hill. On its summit two chairs

*) Norn, i. e. *Norroen*, is the name of the Norwegian language spoken in the western isles.

**) Old Norse *Thingvollr*, i. e. the plain (*vollr*) where the Thing was held. The Tynewald court is the parliament of the Isle of Man.

of state are placed beneath a canopy. One is occupied by the governor or representative of the king, the other by the bishop, and below them the members of the House of Keys and other legally constituted authorities are placed, like the members of the *lagretta**) in the principal Norwegian Things. Then the coroner of Glenfala "fences" the court; peace is proclaimed, and all disturbance forbidden. After this the laws are recited and new statutes promulgated, in Norn as well as in Manx. We wonder that the Norwegians so far away from their ancestral home have been able to keep up their ancient customs.

The Scottish Islands

Not long after this we leave Man and sail northward along the west coast of Scotland. We pass mountains and fiords like those of Norway, but the country is more barren and weatherbeaten. We seldom see trees or groves, and never real forests. The mountains are naked from foot to summit. The reason is that the Atlantic Ocean beats with full force against the islands. Yet the climate is mild and the air full of moisture, so that wherever there is a sheltered spot, vegetation flourishes. Instead of stone fences, which we are accustomed to in Norway, there are hedges of fuchsias; at this time of the year they are in bloom and very pretty with their white and red flowers.

We land on a small island outside of Mull. The ocean stands full upon the island, and the wind blows so that no tree is able to grow, but Iona is one of the sacred spots of western Europe. From this island Scotland was christened, and for centuries the Abbot of Hy**) was more powerful than most bishops. Now he has lost a great deal of his authority. To-day, however, there is a festival in memory of St. Columba, the Apostle of Scotland, and the abbot, looking tall and stately with his mitre on his head and the bejewelled crozier in his hand—for this is one of the privileges he has attained—walks to the beautiful cathedral in order to celebrate mass. In the churchyard by the cathedral we notice many sculptured tombstones. On some of these there has been carved a ship with sails set, and one of the monks tells us that this denotes that a descendant of the ancient kings of the Isles lies buried there.

Here in the southern isles it is only the chieftains who speak Norn. Crofters, small tenants, and laborers speak Gaelic, and some of the chieftains are also inclined to use this language. Yet they are offended if you call them Gaels, and proudly retort that they are Lochlannacs.***) Some of them even tell you that they are descended from King Magnus of Berve****) (Magnus Bare-leg) whose memory is still living here. When we come farther north, however, to the

*) The *lagretta* was a kind of jury, but with power only to give advice.

**) The ancient name of Iona.

***) Men from Lochlann, or Norway.

****) Berve (*Berbhe*) is the ancient Gaelic name of Bergen.



IONA
From an Old Print

large islands of Skye and Lewis, everybody speaks Norn and is able to understand us.

The scenery grows wilder, the land more barren. The wind howls, and the waves break against the shore. With great difficulty we enter a small bay and anchor there. No living being is visible, but suddenly we hear a trumpet high above us, and on the top of a steep, almost inaccessible mountain we discover a castle, or rather a large square tower. No road leads up to the castle; there is only a narrow foot-path, where not more than one man can walk, or rather crawl at a time.

It is Dunvegan, which, according to tradition, was built by Magnus Bare-leg.

In the northern islands we almost forget at first that we are not in Norway. It seems that the only difference is in the dress of the men, who wear the Highland costume, with bare legs, kilt, and tartan checked in various colors so that you can see at once to what clan a man belongs. We soon learn, however, that the clan system pervades the whole community. Outside of the clan there is no feeling of loyalty or common interests. Constant warfare rages between the islanders and the inhabitants of the Scottish mainland. Every spring the islanders set out on viking expeditions to the mainland, just as in pagan times, and they will proudly show you the booty they have taken. It strikes us that the people who live on the islands have not profited much by the beneficent laws of Haakon and Magnus.

We are happy when at last we can leave Lewis and continue our voyage. We pass Cape Wrath, where the sea is never quiet; then we turn eastward along the hills of Sutherland, and safely pass the maelstrom which is so much dreaded by seafarers. On our left we catch sight of a group of islands where the wind blows constantly so that no tree can grow. It is the Orkneys. Thither we steer and land on the eastern shore of Hrossey or Mainland, the largest of



KIRKWALL AND THE ST. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL SEEN FROM THE AYRE
From a Drawing by Joh. Meyer



RUINS OF THE BISHOP'S PALACE IN KIRKWALL, WHERE
 HAARON THE OLD DIED. IN THE BACKGROUND WE SEE
 THE TOWER AND ROOF OF THE CATHEDRAL

the islands, in the bay of Kirkuvágr (Kirkwall). Not far from the shore rises a tall and stately cathedral, which, next, to Christ Church in Nidaros, is the most beautiful and imposing place of divine worship ever built by men of Norwegian descent. It is the Church of St. Magnus erected to the memory of Earl Magnus who was killed in 1116 and afterwards proclaimed a saint.

When we arrive the sky is gray, and everything looks dark and gloomy, but suddenly the sun breaks through the clouds shining on



MIDDLE NAVE IN THE ST. MAGNUS
 CATHEDRAL
Drawing by Joh. Meyer



Courtesy of London, Midland and Scottish Railroad
SENTINELS AT SKYE

the deep-red sandstone and on the yellow pillars and statues of St. Olav and St. Magnus. Opposite the cathedral is the castle of the bishop. An old man whom we meet tells us that he can still remember when King Haakon came back from his expedition to Scotland, in the autumn of 1263, and had to stop here and take to his bed. He tells us that the king, while he was ill, first had the Bible and Latin books read to him, but listening to these books fatigued him, and he commanded that Norse books be read, first the sagas of the holy men, and then the sagas of the kings from Halvdan the Black. At last he came to Sverre's saga. On the 15th of December, which was a Saturday, our informant tells us, the king became worse and was unable to speak. Near midnight the saga of Sverre was finished, but when midnight had passed the Lord called King Haakon from this life. The old man who tells us the story wonders whether a Norwegian king will ever again visit the islands.

The Orkneys are governed by earls, who acknowledge the king of Norway as their liege lord. While we are talking, we see two men coming out of the earl's castle, which is between the cathedral and the bishop's palace. They are in highland costume, flourish their

axes, and talk Gaelic so loud that we can hear them to the other end of the square. As if moved by a common impulse, we both look to the south. We remember that the earl is also the liege of the king of Scotland, and that both he and the bishop are more Scotch than Norwegian. We fear that there may come a time when the Orkneys like the Hebrides may be lost to Norway.

From the Orkneys we again set sail northward and cross the open sea. We soon come to another group of islands which lies still more exposed and fretted by storms. It is Hjaltland (the Shetland Isles). They were formerly subject to the earl of Orkney, but since the days of King Sverre they have formed an integral part of Norway with their own lawman and a sheriff appointed by the king. Hjaltland, like the Orkneys, has for centuries been settled by Norwegians, and the life and manners of the Shetlanders are exactly what we are accustomed to at home. It seems preposterous that these islands should ever be separated from Norway.

The Faroes, Iceland, and Greenland

From Shetland the Faroe Islands are not far away. They also belong to Norway and are settled and inhabited by Norwegians. The name Faroe is derived from the numerous herds of sheep (*faar*) which constitute the chief wealth of the islanders. We land on Straumey at Torshavn, the "haven of Thor," so called from a sanctuary to the god Thor which stood there in pagan times. Torshavn is the center of the islands. Here the inhabitants hold their annual Thing or "moot." Not far away, at Kirkjubö, the bishop has his residence. People tell us of the powerful and warlike Bishop Erlend who died a few years ago, and of the cathedral which he began to build. At present the work is at a standstill, and it will never be finished, for it is more than the poor See can afford, and Erlend died in exile.

From the Faroe Islands we sail to Iceland, the great island between the Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean. We get a glimpse of its glaciers, and visit the Thingvellir. The Althing is assembled, but it has long since ceased to be the scene of stirring events. Since Iceland, in the last days of Haakon the Old, became a dependency of Norway, everything has been quieted down. No new sagas are written; people prefer to listen to the bland and romantic rhyme-songs (*rimur*). No Icelandic ships sail to foreign parts. Trade and commerce are in the hands of Norwegian merchants from Bergen and Trondhjem, while Iceland is daily becoming poorer.

We wanted also to visit Greenland. We have heard much of that strange land—how few of the Greenlanders know what bread is, and how only a small part of the island is not icebound. We also know that the hardy Greenlanders are of our own race, and that in the last days of Haakon the Old they acknowledged the king of Norway

as their liege lord. We know that they have churches and priests and a bishop of their own. But the voyage is long and dangerous. The sea, we are told, is full of terrible monsters, and the ship which the king of Norway, according to his promise, sends every year to Greenland has already left Bergen. We are therefore obliged to return to Norway.

We think we have had an instructive journey. All these islands far away in the ocean, which are tributary to the Norwegian Crown, do not add much to the real power of our country, but they make Norway well known in western Europe, and because of them the Norwegians are not mere stay-at-homes, but are accustomed to travelling abroad and visiting foreign countries. Most important of all, they form a link between Norway and western civilization.

From the Göta River to the White Sea

Returning from Iceland to Norway, we sail to the mouth of the Göta River and pass a small island where the three kingdoms of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark meet. It is called Danaholmr, the holm of the Danes. We enter the northern arm of the river, and sail along the large island Hisingön, until we arrive at the little town Konungahella,*) where the three Scandinavian kings used to meet in olden times. Old people can still tell of what they heard from their fathers and grandfathers and these again from their grandfathers, of these peace-meetings, and of the Swedish princess Margaret Fridkolla who, in 1101, was given to King Magnus of Norway as a peace-offering. At present the town has lost most of its old importance.

Our journey does not end here, however. We also want to know how far the realm of Norway extends in the north and the east. We therefore sail along the coast as far as to Halogaland,**) the northernmost province of Norway. We cross the West Fjord and visit the Lofoden Islands. Thence we continue our voyage north to Vesteraalen and visit Bjarkey, the northernmost lordly seat not only in Norway but in all Europe. The manor house, built of huge logs, is still standing***) and is filled with trophies and relics of olden times, but the lords of Bjarkey have moved farther south to another country seat.

Where Vesteraalen ends, Finmark begins. Finmark is not a county of Norway, but a tributary land. It is an expanse of moss-grown mountains and endless moors, where the small Mongolian Finns or Laplanders, still pagans, roam with their herds of reindeer. Here you may walk for miles and miles without seeing a human

*) The present Kungälf.

**) The present county of Nordland.

***) Not many years afterwards it was burned by the Russians.

habitation. From times immemorial the Malangan fjord divided Finns and *Bumænd* (husbandmen) as the Norwegians who have fixed habitations are called in contra-distinction to the nomadic Laplanders. In the last century, however, King Haakon built a church at Trums,*) and since that time the Norwegians have begun to settle in the edge of the Finmark forests. Here at the northernmost point of his realm King Haakon V has recently built a fortress called Vargeyarhús.**) It is not a strong castle like Akershus outside of Oslo, but only a small block-house built of logs and surrounded by a wall of slate. Sheltered by the fortress a group of wretched half underground turf huts have grown up, and on the shore are a few goats foraging in the ill-smelling heaps of cods' heads.

Humble as it is, we have reason to be proud of Vardöyhus. It is the northernmost fortress in the world. The commandant tells us of the solemn festival a few years ago when the archbishop of Nidaros visited it and consecrated the little church. The neighboring people, he tells us, have already begun to be afraid of the fortress and do not dare to overrun Finmark as openly as before. Here we have more strongly than anywhere else the sense that Norway is still a flourishing country and respected by her neighbors. We accompany the royal deputy on his trip across Finmark to collect the tribute from the Finns as the Norwegians have done from times immemorial. We travel in pulkhas drawn by reindeer from one village of tents to another as far as to the White Sea. There the realm of Norway ends at a promontory called Veggistafr.***) On the journey we meet both Swedish and Russian tax-collectors, but the meeting is peaceful, for the king of Norway is still the most powerful prince in this part of the world.

Through the Eastern Forests

If we really want to know the extent of Norway,****) however, we should travel north from Bohus by land. First we come to Bohuslen, or Ranrike as it is still called, in many ways a rich province, especially because of the herring fisheries, which have turned out unusually well this year. On an islet a little north of the mouth of Göta River the fisheries have caused the development of a small town, Marstrand (Måsstrandir, the shores of the gull). In the harbor are ships from England and Holland, which have come to buy or to salt and dry herring. From Bohus we come to Borgesyssel, so called from the town Sarpsborg founded by St. Olav. We travel along the route of the Norwegians and Swedes who surveyed the boundary together in 1273. We pass through endless forests, cross rivers and lakes, and very

*) Tromsøy.

**) Vardöyhus. *Vargey* means wolf island.

***) Veggistafr, the boundary post of Norway in the northeast, was situated in the neighborhood of Kandalax.

****) Several of the eastern provinces of Norway in the fourteenth century have since become Swedish, namely Bohuslen, Jämtland, and Herjedalen. Borgesyssel (the present Östfold) is still Norwegian, and Elverum is one of the most prosperous of Norwegian country districts.



THE COAST OF BOHUSLEN

seldom see a human habitation. Elverum is only a poor and out of the way parish. The forests so far inland have not yet any value and are only used for making tar. From Elverum we have to walk miles and miles before we reach the frontier. The rivers begin to run eastward into Sweden instead of westward into Norway. Trysil has only a few inhabitants, and most of the farms have been cleared only a few generations ago. The land still belongs to the Norwegian Crown. We cross the river Klar at Sörhus and travel eastward through endless forests. At last we come to another big river, the Eastern Dal River, and there we find human dwellings at Idre and Särna.

From Särna we travel northward to Herjedalen. Once more we meet mountains, moors, and endless forests with no human habitation. Very seldom a daring hunter ventures so far away from his home, and when he returns he tells stories of the ugly, huge, clumsy beings, half human and half animal, whom he has caught glimpses of among the trees and cliffs. No wonder that the place where Särna and Herjedalen meet is called Trollagrof (the pit of trolls).

At Elfros we again see clearings and human dwellings. Here the most important man of the district, the leader of the peasants, has his home. He can trace his family back nearly five hundred years to Heriulf Hornbriot who first settled Herjedalen and began to clear the valley. In the evening we sit before the fire, in his hall built of enormous logs, and listen while he tells the tale of his ancestors. He begins with Heriulf Hornbriot who was a standard-bearer of King

Halvdan the Black, the father of Harold Fair-hair. At a festival in the king's own hall he killed one of the king's men with a silver-mounted drinking horn—hence his surname "Horn-breaker." Because of this deed Heriulf had to flee the country and go to Sweden where he was well received by the king. But he brought down on himself the anger of the Swedish king, too, by marrying the king's kinswoman, Helga, without his consent. Again he had to flee. Heriulf and Helga settled in Herjedalen at Elfros, and their descendants have lived there for sixteen generations. Our host further tells us of Haakon, the son of Heriulf, who was a great hunter and used to catch falcons in the mountains and sell them abroad, hence his surname Valr, a falcon. We hear of Herlaug, a grandson of Haakon surnamed Hornstigi because he used to climb the summit, or "horn," of the highest mountains, a hardy and adventurous man, and we listen to the tale of his son and contrast, Thore, who was so slow that he was called Droge, the slow. The grandson of the grandson of this Thore was Liot who erected the first church in Herjedalen.

From Herjedalen we travel farther north. Again we pass endless forests and moors; we cross rapid rivers and great lakes where the birds are seldom disturbed. Far away we see blue pointed mountain tops. Human beings we seldom meet. There are a few hunters and trappers, and once we come across a clearing in the middle of the forest, where an outlaw who has been obliged to flee from men lives with his wife and children. The children are grown up, but they have never been baptized and are quite savage.

Gradually the country becomes more level, and we see clearings, meadows, fields, and farmhouses along the shores of a large lake. It is Storsjön (the big lake) in Jämtland. It is only a few days before Midsummer Day. The roads are full of people who come from all parts of the country. Some are riding, some are walking, and some drive in clumsy carts. They all cross the lake and land at the small island Frösön. The temple



OLD BELFRY AT ÅRE IN JÄMTLAND

to the god Frey or Frö which gave the island its name has long since been torn down, and a Christian church has been built on its site. But Frösön is still the centre of Jämtland, and on Midsummer Day the inhabitants come together for their Thing, the Jamtamót (the *moot*, or meeting of the "Jamtar," the Jamtlanders). Close to the field where the Thing is held there is a fair where merchants, most of them from Nidaros, have erected their booths. They sell sugar, spices, silk thread, and other fancy articles, while they buy miniver, marten skins, pelts of bear and elk, and other wares that the inhabitants have to sell. Some strolling jugglers have also found their way to the fair.

We have a strong feeling that we are in the outskirts of Norway. During our stay the Archbishop of Uppsala comes to hold a visitation. Although Jämtland belongs to Norway, its ecclesiastical head is not the Archbishop at Nidaros, but his Swedish colleague at Uppsala, and most of the clergymen are likewise Swedes. It strikes us that in case of a war between Norway and Sweden this may be a source of danger.

Our plan originally was to travel farther north and to reach Finmark again by land. But an old peasant, who was one of those surveying the boundary in the days of King Magnus Law-mender tells us that farther north the country is almost impassable. The people are scattered and almost as ignorant now as when King Sverre passed through Jämtland in 1177. Then there were many who did not know whether a king was a man or some kind of animal. At Straum in the northern part of Jämtland nobody knew the Lord's Prayer. Instead of continuing toward the north, we go from Jämtland to Nidaros, and there our journey ends.

* * *

We have learned that the realm of Norway in the beginning of the fourteenth century is still widely extended, from the islands far in the western ocean to the White Sea, and southward to the Danish boundary. We do not dream that before another half century has passed Norway will have lost all her wealth and power, to become ere long a dependency of her stronger and more properous neighbors.

OLD SCULPTURED HEAD

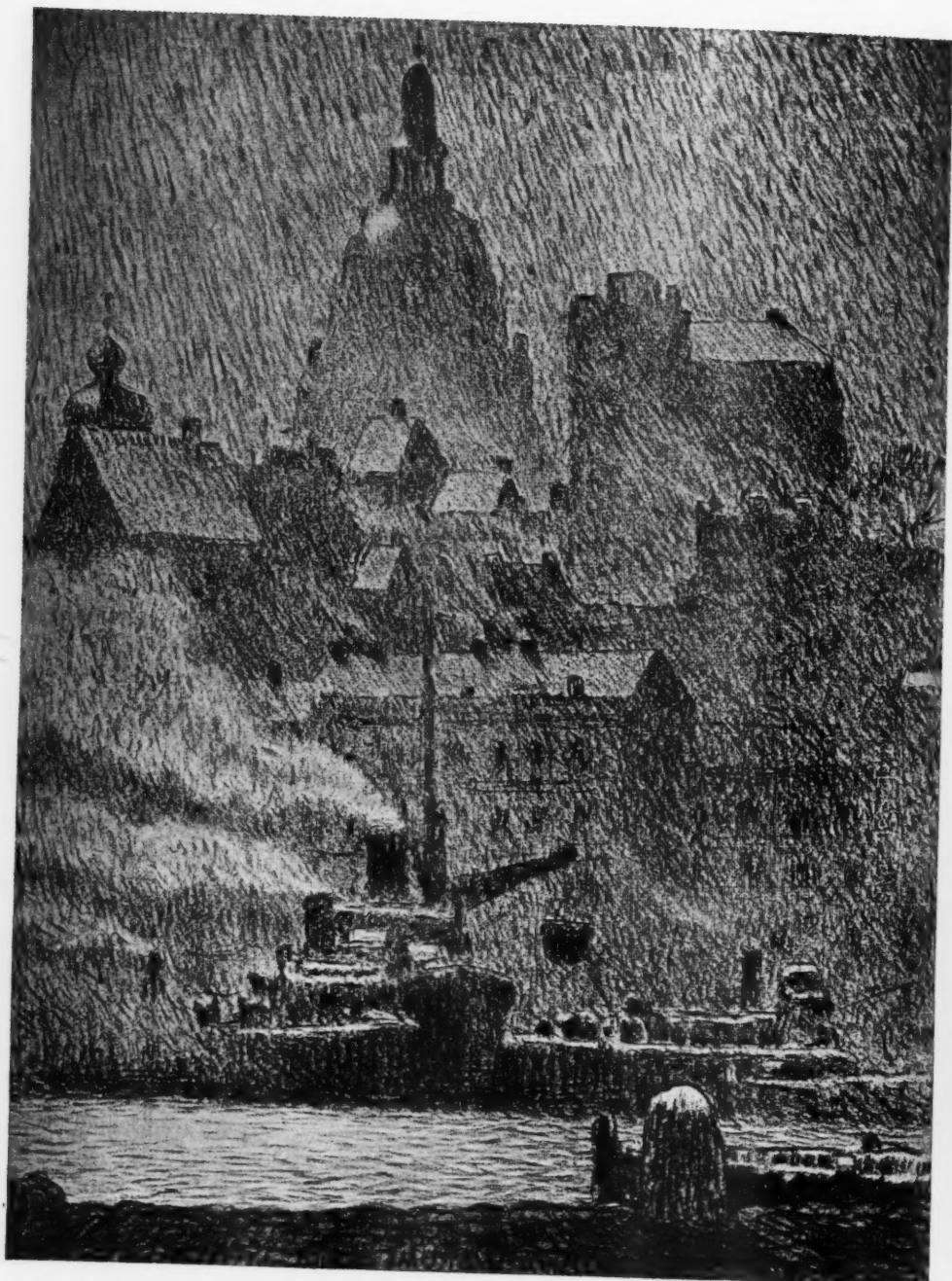


TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL

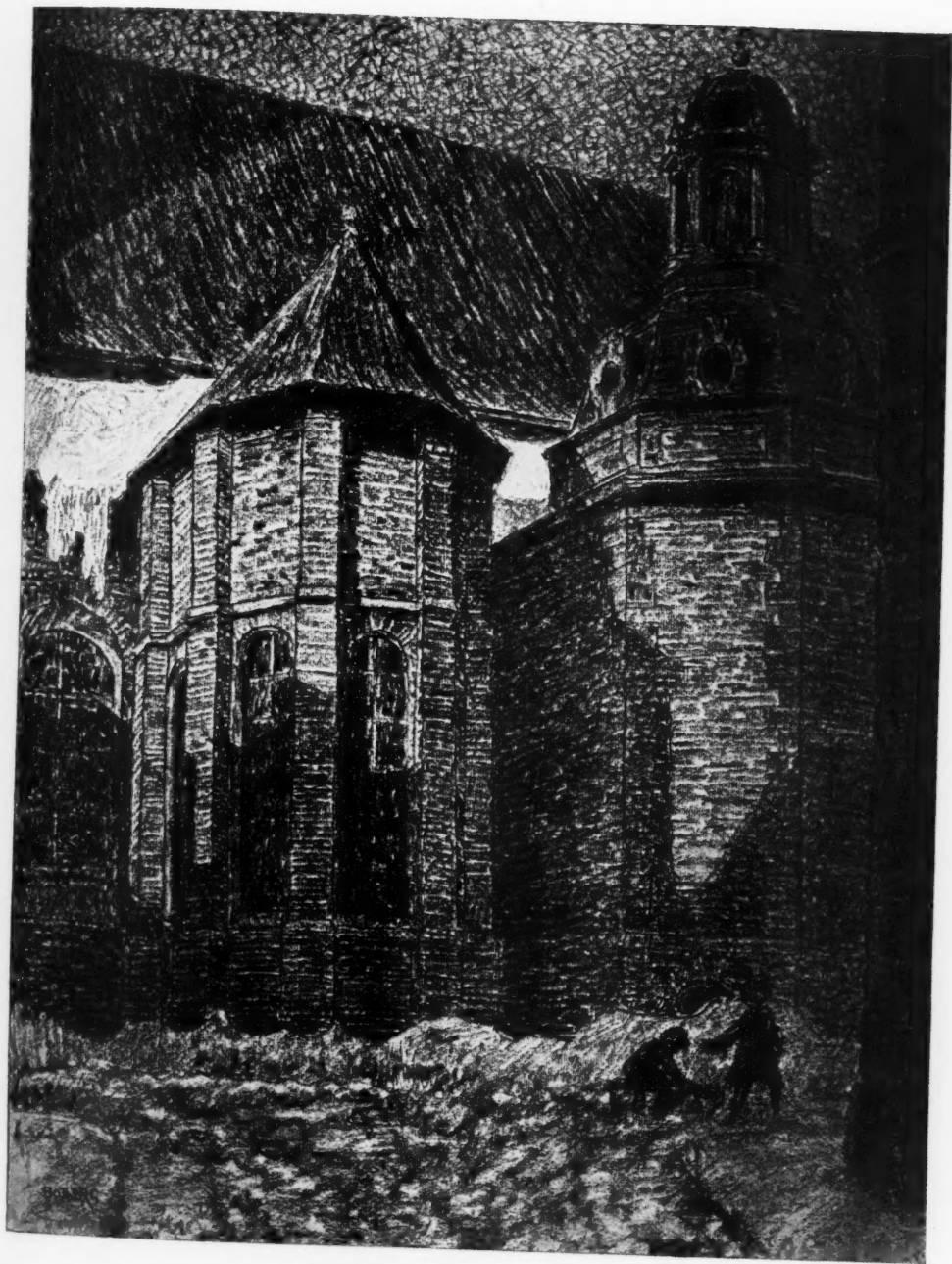


OLD STOCKHOLM

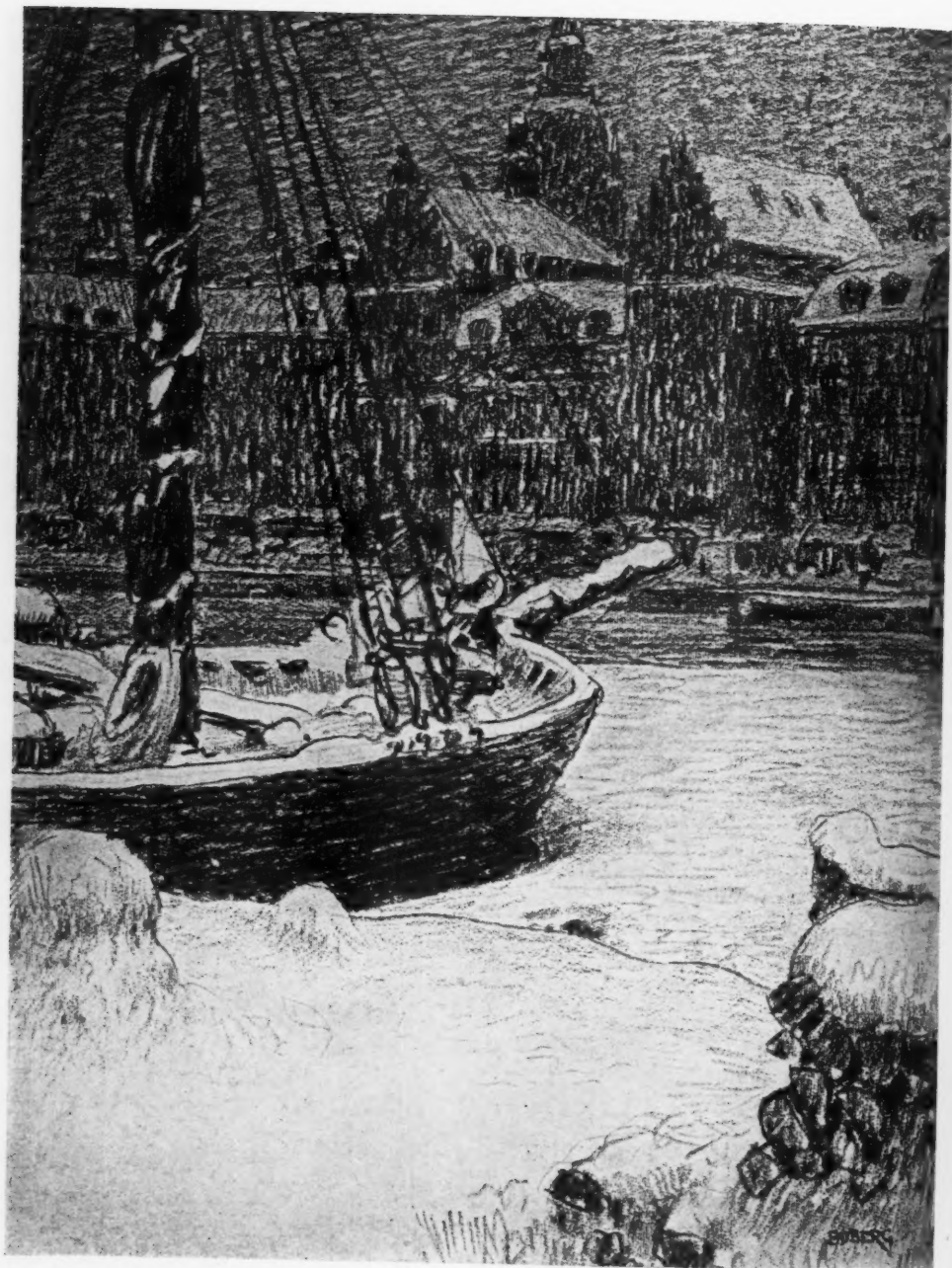
DRAWINGS
BY
FERDINAND BOBERG



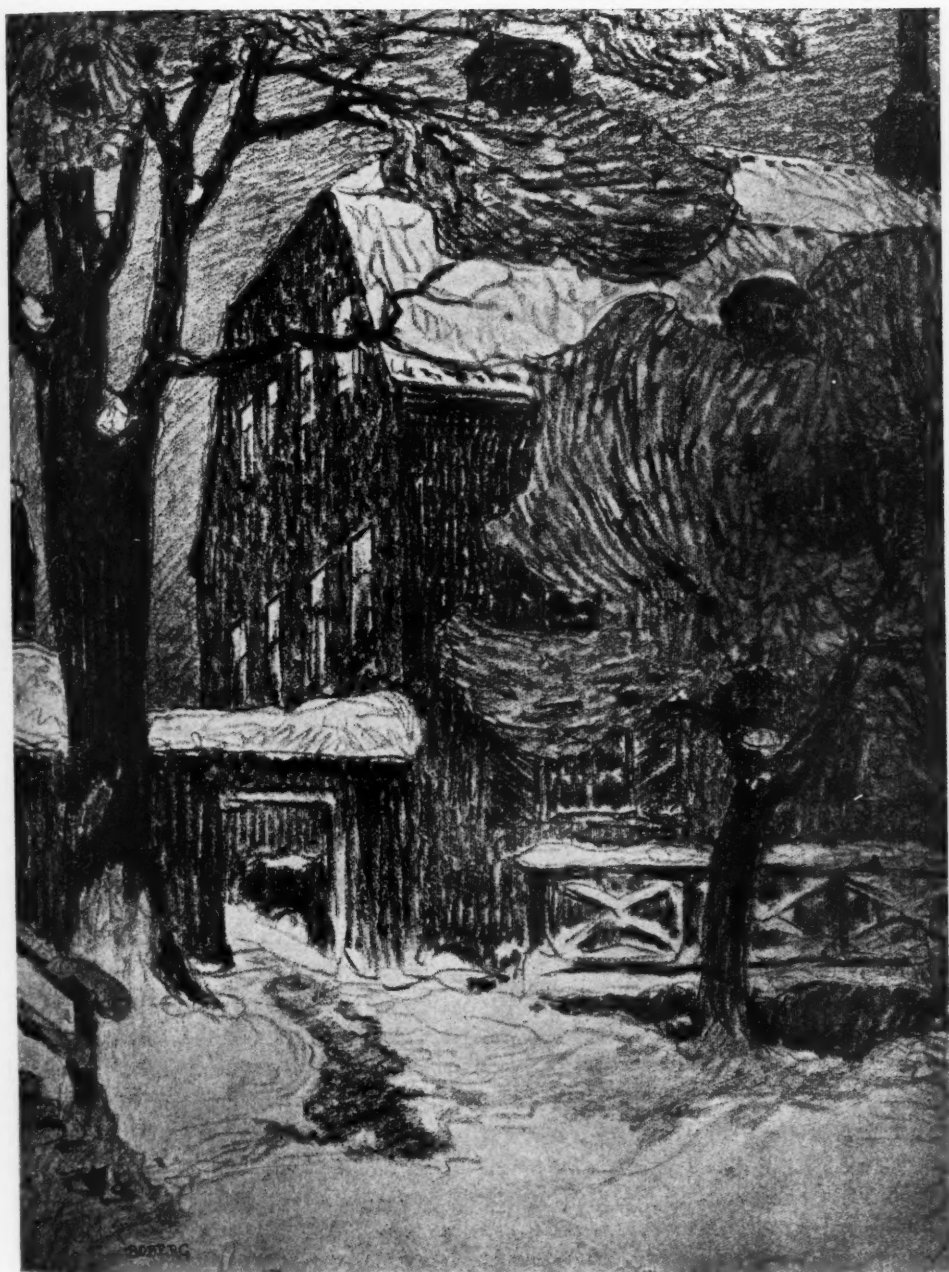
AN ELEVATION OF "SÖDER"



A BIT OF THE RIDDARHOLM CHURCH



KORNHAMNSTORP AND THE GERMAN CHURCH



THE OLD HOUSE "THREE CORNERS" IN DJURGÅRDSSTADEN

Old Time Christmas in Sweden

By LOUISE HAGBERG



STAR BOYS

WHAT PICTURES are unrolled, what sentiments revived when old folks begin to tell of how Christmas was celebrated when they were children! It is with a feeling of sadness we realize that the customs of former days are disappearing one after another, for, after all, they gave to Christmas a meaning and a sacredness which we now miss. In the country districts, where traditions have deepest roots, the old ways persisted longest.

Weeks before Christmas the preparations would begin. There was baking and brewing and slaughtering, washing and cheese-making and candle-dipping, with innumerable other things to be attended to. A fore-taste of Christmas came as early as the thirteenth of December, Lucia Day. On no other day were the members of the household so pampered in the way of food, for it was a superstition that in proportion as one celebrated "Lusse" with due lavishness, the new year would be prosperous. Lucia herself—generally the prettiest girl on the farm or in the manor—would dress in white and wear a crown of whortleberry leaves and gilt paper in which candles, usually nine in number, were set. With candles lit, she would bring the members of the family their morning drink in bed. In olden times it was the foaming ale and mead, but now it is more frequently coffee with sweet cakes. By Lucia Day certain tasks, such as the threshing and weaving for the year, must be completed. In the morning the slaughtering sometimes took place, and the Christmas ale was drawn for the first time.

The holy season was not really ushered in before Christmas Eve, when people greeted each other with the Christmas wish, "God's peace, a merry Christmas, health and all that is good!" Still there remained many tasks to be done. Enough wood and water had to be carried in to last through the holidays. The house must be swept, the walls hung with the woven or painted tapestries, the pewter and copper dishes scoured. The festive table was spread on the morning of Christmas Day, when each member of the family received his "Christmas pile" of bread and sweet cakes, often baked in many quaint shapes. There was the cross, the golden chariot, the golden hen, the yule buck, the yule boar, and the "Nisse" and "Nasse" (brownies). No doubt this custom is a survival from very ancient sacrificial ceremonies, in which the bread baked in the shape of an



AN OLD CHRISTMAS TAPESTRY FROM SMÅLAND

animal took the place of the animal itself. Great significance was attached to the Christmas bread, for it was supposed to possess remarkable powers. In the middle of the table the seed-cake was placed, but this had to stand untouched until the first day of sowing, when pieces of it were given to both men and beasts, for it was supposed to bring good luck in the sowing.

There was too much to be done to think of the noonday meal, and the family had to be content to "dip in the pot," that is they would gather in the kitchen around the huge iron pot in which meat, sausage, and salt pork were cooking, and dip pieces of soft bread in the soup. This custom is still observed even in the cities, and from it Christmas Eve has been called *dopparedagen*, dipping day. So when children began to count the days till Christmas they would say "the day before the day before the day before dipping-day."

When all was ready there would be the Christmas bath, and the family would dress in holiday clothes, which should preferably be new. In the afternoon a blazing fire was lit on the hearth, and the Yule log was put in place, and care was taken that it should be one that would last long. In the evening the Christmas candle was lit. Often it had as many branches as there were members of the family, and all the branches had to be lit at once, for the one whose light first burned down would be the first to die. Hence the flames were carefully watched.

Before the evening meal began, the head of the household would read the Christmas gospel, and all would join in the hymns. The usual fare was stock-fish (*lutfish*), porridge, cakes, and in former days homemade ale. Sometimes a roast pig's head or even a whole



LUCIA WITH LIGHTED CANDLES IN HER CROWN
BRINGS THE FAMILY THE FIRST BREAKFAST



AN INDIVIDUAL "CHRISTMAS PILE" OF BREAD
TOPPED WITH A CAKE SHAPED LIKE A ROOSTER.
THESE PILES WERE NOT TOUCHED UNTIL AFTER
CHRISTMAS

roast pig with an apple in its mouth was placed on the table. This is a survival from the old pagan feasts, when offerings were made to the god of harvests, and the hands of those making the sacrifice were placed on the head of the sacrificial boar, while pledges were made of glorious achievements in the future. The porridge also has very ancient pedigree, but the fish goes no further back than to the Catholic time with its seasons of fasting.

The table must be kept spread all through the holiday season, and everyone who entered the house must eat a little of something in order not to "carry Christmas out of the house." The poor also came in for their share of holiday cheer; there was always enough baked and brewed to divide with them, and they would also receive gifts of candles.

The sense that all the world was kin extended even to the animals, for all living creatures must rejoice at Christmas. Even the watchdog was unchained, so that he should not be bound and miserable while all others were happy. The mistress of the house herself saw to it that the cattle were given extra rations, with the words, "Eat well and be happy, for it is Christmas Eve to-night." The *tomte* (house brownie) had his bowl of porridge, and for the birds sheaves of grain were raised on poles.

The floor was spread with a thick layer of flailed straw, an

event that was longed for by young and old, for many games would be played in the straw, and curious figures could be made of it, such as crosses, yule bucks, dolls, and other things. The cross was laid under the table as a protection against evil forces. It has been supposed in later days that the straw was there to remind people of the straw in the manger of Jesus. On Christmas night the family slept in the straw, for on that night the beds were given over to the departed, who were supposed to visit their former homes. The table was also kept spread for them, for Christmas is a feast not only for the living, but for the dead, and candles were left burning for them all night. As a protection against evil spirits that might be about, the head of the house would draw a cross over the door.

Midnight is the most significant hour of Christmas night, for in that holy hour the Christ child was born. Then all nature praises heaven, and many miracles take place. For a moment all animals receive human voice in order to praise the Savior of the world. The cattle must be fed before midnight, and afterwards they must not be disturbed, for in that holy hour they fall on their knees beside their mangers. The bees sing in their hives. The stars dance in the heavens. All trees and plants blossom as in the garden of Paradise. For a moment all running water stops in its course, and the



THE YULE BUCK, DRESSED IN A FUR ROBE AND WITH REAL HORNS, ACCOMPANIED BY A YULE GOAT, ALSO A MAN DRESSED IN A WOMAN'S PETTICOAT AND WITH HORNS OF TWISTED RAGS



MUMMERS GO VISITING ON HILARYMAS AND ARE INVITED IN FOR A DRINK OF BRANDY. THE ONE DRESSED AS A WOMAN IS THE SPOKESMAN

water in all springs and wells is changed into wine. If one is awake at this time one may see the flame of the Christmas candle divide in two and burn with a double light. And before the living celebrate their morning service the dead assemble at midnight in the church and celebrate mass with burning candles. Traces of dust and ashes are sometimes found in the pews after they have been there.



A YULE BUCK OF STRAW AND CLOTH

As early as three or four in the morning matins began, and those who had far to go had to start shortly after midnight in order to get there in time. Before leaving they would light the candles in the windows, and from every house along the way the light shone. And all the church-goers, whether driving or walking, would carry torches before them which would gleam like huge stars against the snow. At the church all would throw their torches into a pile, so that the flame of them rose to heaven, and the light shone far and wide. If the flames rose straight up, it was the sign of a good harvest; but if they crept low, a poor year was in prospect. After the service all would rush out of the church, for the first to get home after Christmas matins would be the first to gather in his harvest next fall. So the home-going would become a mad race, and in order to make the horses spirited and swift they were often given a taste of the Christmas ale or brandy. The bells jingled merrily from every sleigh, unless a family was in mourning, when no bells were used at all.

Christmas Day was spent at home. It was considered very bad form to go visiting on that day, and any one venturing on it might be called a Christmas hog and be asked to sit on the broom.

On Second-day Christmas, St. Stephen's day, the merriment was resumed with dancing parties and visits to the neighbors. The men were out early and raced their horses to running water, for at the end of the year the water was supposed to possess a special potency, and every man was anxious to get the benefit of its first strength. The "Stephen riders" also rode around to the various houses and sang the ballad of "Stephen stable boy and his five colts." Or the "Stephen boys" dressed in white with high paper caps went the rounds carrying a star-shaped lantern with burning candles inside on a long pole.



A TWELFTH NIGHT PROCESSION GOING FROM DOOR TO DOOR, SINGING AND CARRYING THE ELABORATELY MADE STAR. THE LEADER IS A MASKED JUDAS WHO BEGS THE PENNIES AFTERWARDS USED FOR A CHRISTMAS FEAST

On Twelfth Night the "star boys" again went around, but then they symbolized the three wise men of the East who, guided by the star, came to worship the newborn king of the Jews at Bethlehem. Sometimes they were accompanied by King Herod or Judas with the purse, a terrifying figure with a scarecrow face and a skin coat. Judas collected money in his purse, and this money and gifts of food afterwards made a feast. The custom was a survival of the popular religious dramas of Catholic times, and even to-day the "star boys" go around at Christmas time. Judas usually brought with him a yule buck which might be made of straw or might be a man dressed to look like a goat. This yule buck appeared at other times during the Christmas season too, and was often a man in a fur coat carrying a real or make-believe goat's head on a pole. The children were very much afraid of him, until they found that he brought them apples, nuts, and other presents. The exchange of Christmas gifts was not, however, customary in former days, certainly not to the extent to which it is practised now.

The Christmas tree is also a comparatively modern innovation, which did not become common in Sweden before the end of the nineteenth century. In a few instances it may have been used among the

upper classes in the eighteenth century; the earliest of which we have any knowledge is from 1741. There was a custom, however, of erecting a Christmas pole outdoors, usually a pine trunk stripped of all its branches with only the top left intact. This old-fashioned kind of Christmas tree may still be seen occasionally together with the modern indoor tree.

On Hilarymas, the twentieth day after Christmas, the tree was stripped, and the holiday season came to an end, for *Tjugonde dag Knut kör julen ut*. The feasting and the gaiety are over, everyday life resumes its course—and the children begin to dream of next Christmas.



Petrus: The Silent Mountain Priest

By JOHAN FALKBERGET

Translated from the Norwegian by ANDERS ORBECK

THE German fugitive and adventurer Herr Quat, Lossius's friend and compatriot, was master builder in charge of the first church of the new mining town. The church was to be erected in the course of a single short year: such was the mandate of the high sponsors, graciously confirmed by His Majesty King Frederik III.

It was summer in the mountains, and the days were bright and clear through the whole twenty-four hours. Night and day alike the lumbermen's axes rang out on the rounds of timber, and the master builder allowed himself no rest, no peace. He was never so much as unbooted the whole week long, and could at all hours be seen standing, in a mine inspector's uniform, high up on the scaffolding, a plumb-line in his belt, pointing with his short sword every time he gave an order—an order which had to be obeyed blindly and punctually. He was a stern and exacting master, this German builder.

Every morning, as the sun rose and gilded the mountain peaks

and their snow white fields, the master builder called his journeymen together for morning prayers. The sunburnt workmen took their places beneath the church wall and sang.

*"O Herr, durch deines lichten Glanz
zu dem Glauben versammelt hast
das Volk aus aller Welt-Zungen;
das sei dir, Herr, zu Lob gesungen."*

Herr Quat then officiated at prayers. Whereupon they sang again.

*"Lobet den Herren,
denn er ist sehr freundlich.
Es ist sehr köstlich, unsern Gott zu loben;
sein Lob ist schön und lieblich anzuhören.
Lobet den Herren!"*

One morning the master builder noticed, standing among his journeymen, a young man in shaggy skins and a pointed many-colored cap, his hands reverently folded as he sang. His face was pale and inscrutable, and there was something far away in his eyes when now and then he glanced up. His voice was not so rough and deep as the others', but more like a woman's, high and clear, and in his singing there was something ecstatic. Who was he? Not one of the journeymen. Nor at the mines had the master builder seen him before. The unwonted garb only increased his curiosity.

After prayers Herr Quat hastened over to him, thrust his sword point at his breast, and asked, "Sag mir flugs wer du bist?"

The young man in the garb of skins merely shook his head. He did not understand what the master builder said.

Herr Quat hailed his servant boy, Öven-Anders.

"Willst du mein Dolmetscher sein, du Knecht?"

"He is a mountain Finn!" explained Öven-Anders. "He wants to know whether he can get work on the church."

The master builder felt of his arms—they were altogether too thin and weak, and he smiled and turned away. No, there was no work here for weaklings. To put up a church in the course of a short mountain summer—and under roof it had to be before the autumn snow-storms came—called for supermen rather.

Öven-Anders let the Finn understand that he could get nothing to do here,—he had better be off! And without so much as answering him the mountain Finn went his way, his thumbs in his belt and his head bent low, down towards the smelteries.

Among the workmen on the church there was not a little laughing and chatting about the Finn when they learned what it was that he wanted. What did he think he could do here? Had he ever sunk an ax in a beam?

Within a day the little episode was altogether forgotten. There were so many strange people coming here asking to do now this and

now that. No one knew where they came from or whither they went; nor was there any one who troubled himself much about it. The building was speeded up, the industrious journeymen standing bare-headed and almost naked above the waist in the roasting sun of the noonday.

Öven-Anders, the master builder's servant boy, was commissioned to carry water about on the scaffolding, to prevent the workmen wasting their time running back and forth between the brook and the church to quench their thirst. Those of them who thought they could afford it sent him also down to the pub for a pail of brew—something preferably consumed beyond the master builder's ken; for the bad ale made the workmen sleepy, and there was little time for sleep.

One morning the Finn stood again among the journeymen beneath the church wall and sang. Whence did he come? They first became aware of him when they heard him sing, and those nearest him heard him use other words, altogether different, words they did not understand; but the melody was correct—even beautiful. After the singing he disappeared again. The workmen now came to feel there was something almost mystical about him, and there were those who suggested that there must be something supernatural about this man, who came and vanished in so mysterious a way. Was he perhaps a magician Finn who donned the cap of invisibility and showed himself wherever he pleased? Öven-Anders, among others, was of that opinion, and he made up his mind to throw a bit of steel over him the next time he appeared beneath the church wall. In case he were possessed of evil powers something would then come to light. During the building of a church in Solör there had been such a stranger whom they had found it necessary to treat thus and who then disappeared for good. Many a day now Öven-Anders went about with a piece of steel in his pocket; but the Finn stayed away. He had perhaps definitely gone back to the mountains.

One evening, as Öven-Anders went into the master builder's cabin to prepare the master builder's evening gruel, he saw there the Finn sitting on the flagstone of the ingle. Öven-Anders was not slow to bring forth the bit of steel from his vest pocket and throw it over the Finn's head so that it rang out against the wall. But nothing happened. Öven-Anders was puzzled. Was the steel of no avail?

The Finn smiled and looked up at him. There was something condescending in the smile which Öven-Anders little liked.

"You perhaps think I am from the underworld?" he said

"Hm!" mumbled Öven-Anders. "What is one to think?"

"Don't you see that I am a mountain Finn?"

Yes, thought Öven-Anders, he did look like a Finn.

"Sit down!" said the Finn. "Here!" He pointed to a place on the flagstone beside him.

But Öven-Anders had little desire to sit so close. He was not yet altogether reassured that it was a human being he had to do with.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Nils."

"Where do you hail from?"

"From Storsylen and Skaldörene."

"And what do you want here?"

What he wanted? He wanted to try to get some work on the new church; he thought he could manage to make some pretty carvings for ornamentation. He had tried his hand at it in Östersund. He had worked with a wood carver there for four years and had learned the art. He had just come away this spring. He had tramped on foot from Östersund to Trondhjem, where he had stopped to see the wood carvings in the cathedral.

"You, a mountain Finn!" interrupted Öven-Anders.

He smiled again, and then he continued. "The night after I stood looking at the altar in the cathedral I had a strange dream. I thought a man appeared in the doorway and said 'Wake up, Nils! You are to go south to the new mining town. They are building a new church there, and you are to beautify it with your carvings. You have received the great gift to serve God therewith!'"

"How did the man look?" Öven-Anders now began to get curious.

"He was dressed in a most unusual garb," he explained, "a red mantle reaching to his feet, in his hand a long staff, and on his head a three-cornered cap."

"A three-cornered cap?" repeated Öven-Anders.

"Yes," said the Finn, and fell to meditating.

Öven-Anders, too, stood cogitating. He had never before heard such a dream.

"I'll speak to Herr Quat!" he said. And he went to lighting the fire and putting on the water for the gruel.

The Finn glided quietly out through the door. There was no word of farewell, nor did he look back. The door closed behind him without a sound.

* * *

In a cabin down below the church sat Nils the Finn and carved ornaments for the church. Herr Quat dropped in every now and then, stood leaning on his short sword, and for long periods watched the Finn work. Now and then he nodded approvingly.

"Dieses gefällt mir!"

Whereupon he noisily sheathed his sword and withdrew.

Nils was a man of the fewest words. He very rarely entered into talk with any one. He sat as in a dream and carved the hard smooth wood. No matter what time of day they dropped in on him, he was always at work. No one saw him eat or sleep.

One day the master builder came in and stood examining his ornaments for some time.

"Bist du auch Bildschnitzer?" he asked at length.

Nils looked up uncomprehendingly at the master builder.

Öven-Anders was again called in as interpreter. For a while Nils merely sat and stared into space.

"Yes, I might try." He almost whispered it.

From that day hence Nils barred his door. He let no one in, nor was he ever seen out of doors. The master builder came more than once and knocked at the door with the pommel of his sword and called "Mach auf! Mach auf!"

But the door remained barred. They could hear him breathe within. And now Nils the Finn became the main talk of the day among the journeymen up on the church. They were all agreed that he was a great worker of miracles with his tools. But had ever a Finn been able to do such things before? The pieces he had finished were really and truly incomparable. Prettier church ornaments no one had ever seen. And many of the journeymen had helped build churches elsewhere and had seen all sorts of carvings and decorations, but these of Nils surpassed them all. What was he occupied with now? One morning the answer came. Öven-Anders had in the course of the night peeked through a crack in the wall, and he had seen a huge wooden figure,—yes, as large as a full-grown human being. In the shavings beside it lay Nils the Finn asleep.

When the master builder the next morning came with his servant and rapped on the wood carver's door and called his usual "Mach auf!" the door opened.

The Finn's face almost frightened the master builder. It was yellow and wan from loss of sleep.

Within on the floor stood a wooden figure representing a man kneeling in prayer over folded hands. His face was seamed with sorrow, suffering and agony visible in every feature, and about his hands there was something cramped and strained. The whole figure huddled together as if under some heavy burden. On the socle was carved the name *PETRUS*.

"Das ist ein viel zu trauriges Bild um in der Kirche zu haben!" said the master builder.

When Öven-Anders translated this remark for the Finn, there crept over his face a look of pain. He answered nothing, turned away from them, and busied himself with something else. The master builder and his servant withdrew.

Next morning the door to the shed stood wide open. Nils the Finn and his statue were gone. This fact, too, was in the days immediately following carefully sifted among the workmen. Had the master builder acted foolishly? From what Öven-Anders reported, he had very brusquely told the Finn that the statue could not be placed

in the church—an opinion which Öven-Anders for that matter concurred in; but it was clear as day that he had no real understanding of the matter,—for what the master had said he had meant as nonsense.

Now that he had presumably vanished for good, Nils the Finn grew to be something of a great man, a hero, in the eyes of the workmen. His light and beautiful voice during morning prayers beneath the church wall they missed. To all these lonely men there was something wonderfully edifying in a woman's voice in the singing, even though they knew it was a man who sang. This mild, silver clear voice aroused in them a mighty and wistful longing for their homes, their wives, and their happy and playful children. And could they not rightfully feel incensed at the master builder who had by his indiscretion so offended Nils the Finn that he had left them?

The master builder himself also fell to thinking that perhaps he had not treated the wood carver and his art in the right way. He began to ask all he met whether they had seen anything of Nils the Finn,—but no, there was no one had seen him. He was gone as though swallowed up by the earth. The master builder now had to look about for another wood carver to continue the work; for the church was nearing completion. Within a few weeks they could begin fitting up the interior, and there was not a little lacking in the way of ornaments. He let several try who said they were wood carvers, but none of them could bring forth anything that could stand comparison with the handiwork of Nils.

* * *

What finally became of Nils the Finn? No one has since been able definitely to clear up the matter. A fireman, who came to the copper works from the Swedish uplands, could tell of a wood carver who worked on churches up there. He was said to be a man much sought after, but whether he was the man who had worked here under the name of Nils the Finn was not easy to say.

If Nils the Finn thus vanished from the saga without leaving a trace, it did not fare thus with his handiwork. It often happens that the work survives its creator. Through Storsylen there ran in those days—in the middle of the seventeenth century—a path, or rather a pack road, which the people of both sides of the Kjölen had made use of from time immemorial. Swedish warriors had traveled it; many a bride, crowned in all her glory, had from the saddle, as she passed along, gazed in uncertain expectancy towards the new home on the other side; through long winters pack-drivers, row upon row, had trailed it on their way from either kingdom.

Here high up in the mountain, where the road skirts a tarn—the Trondkjönna—a Swedish horseman one clear autumn day reined in his horse and stared in amazement straight ahead. Was that a human being he saw? Some one kneeling! He rode nearer and

called out, "Who's there?" No response. He speculated as to whether it was a corpse, and his astonishment did not grow less when he saw it was neither a dead body nor living, but a figure in wood of a human being. He dismounted, leaned down, and read *PETRUS*. He stood there for some time in deep thought, staring at the bended head and the folded hands. Here he visualized the fallen and penitent apostle, the apostle who denied his lord and master in the hour of need. And the horseman rode away with a sermon engraved in his heart. He was touched by this reminder of the death of Christ and of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

And what happened to him happened also to hundreds of other wayfarers. They all stopped in silence before the kneeling Petrus.

Who carved this figure? And who placed it there? The artist had nowhere cut his name. The approbation of the world had for him been a trivial thing—God's approbation everything! He had here installed a silent, yet challenging mountain priest, whose church was nothing less than the Kjölen's glittering stretches, its roof the great blue heavens, its bells the ringing heather and the shiny leaves of the underbrush.

* * *

One winter day there came over the mountain a bridal party. They came from the church in Aalen. When they left the church the weather was of the best, almost spring-like, and there was joy and merriment in their hearts. No one thought that a day such as this could bring forth any threatening danger. But the weather in the mountains is variable; it can change from the mildest of sunshine to the wildest of snow-storms in the course of a half hour. Mountain folk are prepared for such changes and make their plans accordingly, but even so it is not seldom that weather and wind and snow exact their victims.

Just above the timber line, where the old road sets out over the bleak expanse, it was customary for wayfarers to rest a bit before they ventured in over the many miles, where storm and snow could rage without let or hindrance.

Here the bridal party also came to a stop. The horses were fed and the guests served. It was a six hour steady drive now to the timber line on the other side. In the course of this time the weather and the roads can change materially. The roads can be snowed under, and the snow squalls become so fierce that the drivers can scarce glimpse the horses ahead of them. There is need then of hardiness and endurance, alike in man and beast. On the open expanse the snow is too hard to dig one's self in, and many a traveler has had to seek shelter behind a rock and leave his horses and loads to inevitable fate.

Now, too, the storm set in—without any preliminary warning. The

whole expanse was lost in the raging snow flurries. The women huddled together in their skin garments. The men sat in front of the sledges and sought to keep the horses to the road, but it was not long before they lost it, and then they drove on, hour after hour, not knowing whither. The bridal journey threatened to become a funeral journey, and little by little fear and anxiety crept into their souls. The women began to sob, and the men grew serious and their features rigid.

Suddenly an old man in the rear called out, "Take it easy! With God's good help we'll find our way out."

Most of them sceptically shook their heads. There was not one who longer knew where they really were. Perhaps already they were miles away from the road, and a dreadful night was approaching—their last perhaps. Ere the morrow perhaps the snow would have spread its great mantle over them all.

Another hour they drove on at random. The old man tried as best he knew how to comfort the more anxious of them. He was secure in his faith. The All Highest, who held everything in his power, would find a way out. It was only necessary to have faith and to be a bit patient.

Strange as it may seem, there was a momentary lull in the storm, and they glimpsed there in the mountain the wooden figure of the kneeling Petrus. They sent forth a cry of joy. For now they knew where they were; the direction was clear and the road recovered. In another few hours they would reach the timber line on the other side.

At the statue the bridal party came to a stop. Some few began to sing, others joined them, and soon they were all singing out of sheer joy.

*"Where are there joys so rare
That can with heaven's compare,
Where hosts of angels gather
Around His throne so fair
And sing 'fore God the Father
To a thousand trumpets' blare.
Would that we were there!"*

Then they drove on, crossed the mountain safely, and reached the other side. And they all had the feeling that a miracle had happened. The story traveled far and wide, and the memory of it was for long years cherished by the people on either side of the Kjölen.

The statue of the kneeling Petrus was to be seen up there far down into the eighteenth century, but fair weather and foul and the teeth of time gnawed at it as they do at all things. The old mountain road was given up long years ago. For long stretches now it is grown wild again, and the wooden Petrus found its grave at length in the moss and the heather.



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Nils the Finn, who in his time had placed it there to remind the wayfaring of "the eternal things," has, as one who received the ten talents, gone to his reward. His name is nowhere to be found among "the great and renowned" on this earth, but the applause of this world is a trivial thing. His name stands perhaps among the foremost in the records of heaven.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
OLD HOUSE NEAR THE SOFIA CHURCH, STOCKHOLM. Drawing by Ferdinand Boberg	Cover
KNUD RASMUSSEN. Portrait.....	Frontispiece
AN ARCTIC CHRISTMAS. By Knud Rasmussen. Five Illustrations.....	717
AN EMPIRE OF THE SEA. A FOURTEENTH CENTURY JOURNEY THROUGH THE REALM OF NORWAY. By Alexander Bugge. Eleven Illustrations	724
OLD STOCKHOLM. Five Drawings by Ferdinand Boberg.....	739
OLD TIME CHRISTMAS IN SWEDEN. By Louise Hagberg. Eight Illus- trations	744
PETRUS: THE SILENT MOUNTAIN PRIEST. By Johan Falkberget, Vignette by Johan Bull.....	750



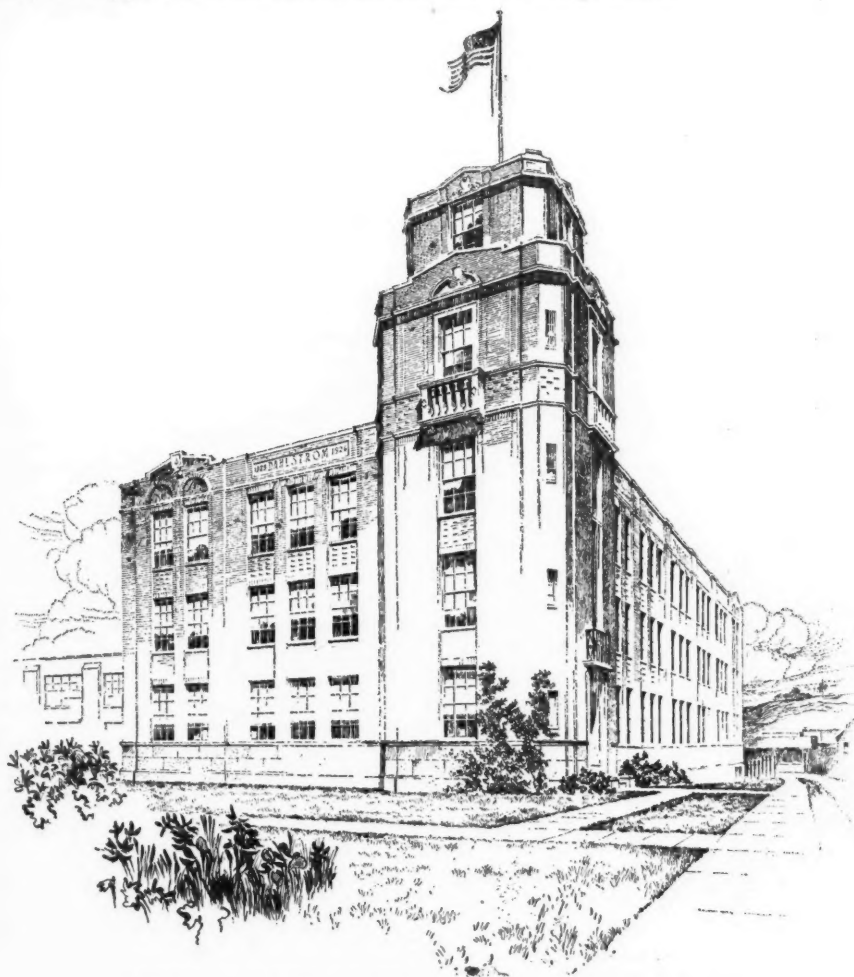
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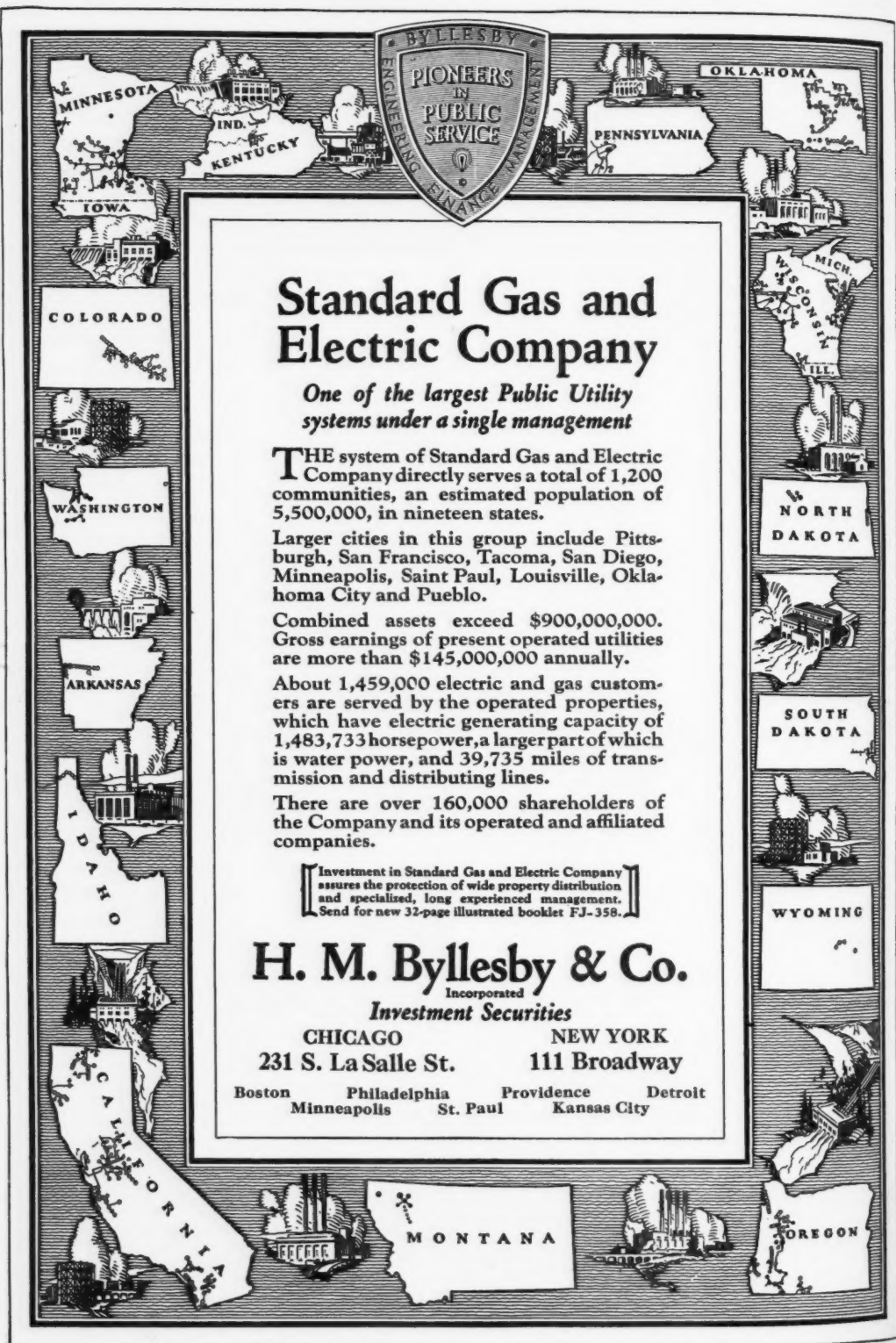
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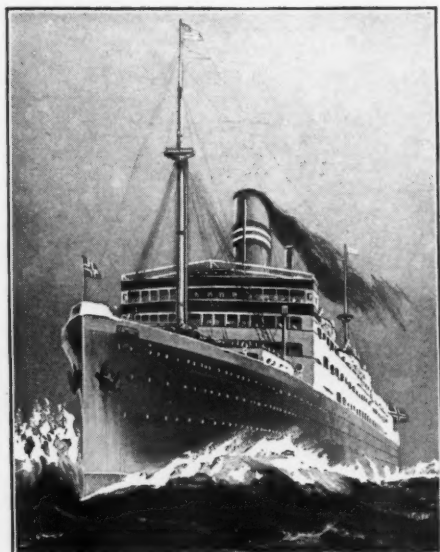
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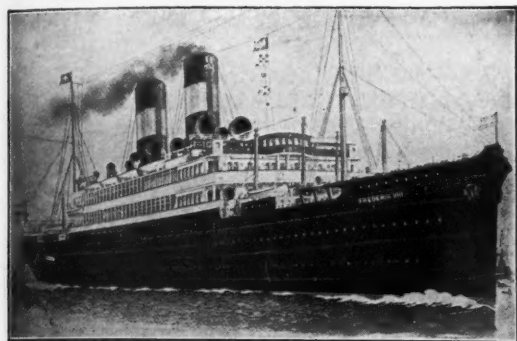


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1927			
Jan. 7	Jan. 8	United States -	Jan. 27††
Jan. 28	Jan. 29	Hellig Olav -	Feb. 17††
Feb. 18	Feb. 19	*United States -	Mar. 10
Feb. 25	Feb. 26	*Oscar II -	Mar. 17††
Mar. 11	Mar. 12	*Hellig Olav -	Mar. 31

*Calling at Halifax, Westbound.

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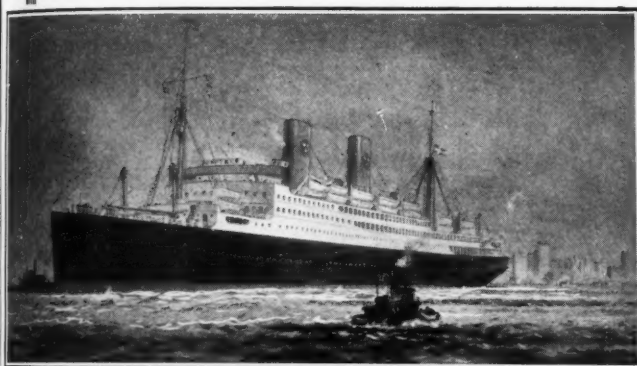
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1927		1927
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Feb. 5	DROTTNINGHOLM	Jan. 22*
Feb. 26	STOCKHOLM	Feb. 11*
Mar. 19	DROTTNINGHOLM	Mar. 5*
Apr. 2	STOCKHOLM	Mar. 17*
Apr. 16	GRIPSHOLM	Apr. 2
Apr. 26	DROTTNINGHOLM	Apr. 9*

*Calling at Halifax, Canada, Westbound

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